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The Memorial of the Just.

A FUNERAL SERMON,

OCCASIONED BY THE

DEATH OF

SARAH JOHNSON,

WHO DIED SEPTEMBER 4th, 1845,

AT THE

ADVANCED AGE OF NEARLY ONE HUNDRED AND FOUR YEARS.

PREACHED IN

ST. JAMES' FIRST AFRICAN PROT. EPIS. CHURCH,

BALTIMORE,

On Sunday, September 21st, 1845,

BY REV. J. N. M'JILTON, A. M.,

RECTOR OF ST. STEPHEN'S, AND RECTOR IN CHARGE OF
ST. JAMES' FIRST AFRICAN CHURCH, BALTIMORE.

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BALTIMORE, September 23d, 1845.

REV. SIR:

Believing, as we do, that the funeral sermon preached by you in St. James' First African Protestant Episcopal church, on Sunday afternoon the 21st inst., on the death of Sarah Johnson, sets forth the doctrines of the church as they are seen in the operations of practical life, and believing also that if the same were published it would contribute to the extension of true christian doctrine, and to the advancement of the cause of religion; we therefore respectfully solicit a copy of it for publication.

Yours, with the highest respect and esteem,

H. H. WEBB,
PHILIP PRICE,
J. H. WHIPPER,
J. F. GORDON,
ALEX. T. AUGUSTA,
WILLIAM BOWIE,
JAMES M. OLIVER,
PERRY H. RIDOUT,
ELIJAH JONES,
RICHARD MASON,

PHILIP MYERS,
DANIEL FRANKLIN,
CORNELIUS THOMPSON,
YORK MILLS,
JACOB P. HYNSON,
EDWARD HOLLINS,
EMERY GENROUS,
WILLIAM MADDOX,
WILLIAM H. WATERS,
GEORGE PRICE.

To REV. J. N. M'JILTON, A. M., }
Rector of St. Stephen's church. }

St. STEPHEN'S RECTORY, September 24th, 1845.

MY DEAR BRETHREN:

In the history of our departed friend Sarah Johnson, the doctrines of our holy religion were practically exemplified. She was a devoted member of the church, and studied its doctrines and duties for the purpose of carrying them out in her practice. Her life, for many years was a living commentary upon the church catechism, and her death at within a few months of the remarkable age of one hundred and four years, gave me an opportunity, as far as I was able to do it, of holding up the church to the view of the congregation of St. James' in the life of one of its members.

If you think the publication of the sermon would further the object contemplated, you are welcome so to use it.

Affectionately yours,

J. N. M'JILTON.

To Messrs. H. H. WEBB, and others.

THE MEMORIAL OF THE JUST.

Proverbs, 10th chapter, 7th verse.

“The memory of the just is blessed.”

1. 1. THE Scriptures represent the just as those who fear God and work righteousness in His name. As a body, they compose the “blessed company of faithful people,” who are chosen out of the world and separated from it on account of their acceptance of Christ, and of their obedience to the call which He makes upon all men to come to Him for spiritual life and for everlasting salvation. They are the seed elect and precious, gathered from the multitudes of the fallen, and appointed to the high and honorable position of servants and sons of God. Born of water and of the Spirit, they obtain a covenant relation to God in the renewed life which the process is designed to effect. The bonds of the covenant, the vows of which they take upon themselves in the assumption of religious responsibility and duty, bind them to their omnipotent Head and Guide, and into one body under Him,—a body which is animated by His Spirit and governed by His authority. Washed in the same Laver of Regeneration, they are members of the same spiritual household—members of one another and of the Lord who hath called them into His service. And as members of the covenant, or of God’s spiritual household, the promises and immunities of the gospel are theirs, secured to them in the consideration of their obedience, by the sufferings and death of the one great Sacrifice that was offered for the sins of the world.

2. Nor is this union of the just with one another as a body and with the Lord Jesus Christ their Head, a thing merely of name or profession. It is a reality. A thing of living existence. A true spiritual vitality. It is a reality as perfect as the union of the head and body of a living man, and of the different members to his body. It is a living existence seen and felt in its operations and known by its fruits. It is a vitality inhabited by a living active spirit and

moved by its power. Neither are the proofs of the union all infernal and unseen. The Spirit that dwells within the body dwells also in the heart of each of its members; and in the body, and in the heart of each member, is productive of fruits—fruits which are seen in the actual operations of the body, and in the life of every individual in connection with it. And these fruits are such as can be produced by no body of unregenerated men, nor by any individual man in his natural state. They are the fruits of holiness, which no man can exhibit, unless he be in Christ a new creature. And in order to this he must be thoroughly changed by the power of the Holy Ghost in the use of provided means. He must be renewed from his state of nature to the state of grace which deadens his propensity to sin and assimilates him into the likeness of his Lord. And this state of grace in which he works out his salvation, he occupies, through the merits and mediation of Him alone, who is his Sacrifice for sin, and his Redeemer unto everlasting life.

3. Such is the teaching of the Sacred Record, and from it we learn that those who are styled the just, are not so of themselves nor “of their own works and deservings,” but, as the eleventh article of the church most clearly expresses it, “We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith.” So that the salvation of the just, who are said to live by faith,¹ is not secured through their own righteousness, but by the righteousness of the Redeemer who suffered for them in fulfilling the law, and completed His mediation in the offering of His own body on the tree. And most wisely was it provided that the just should be wrapped in the spotless robe of the Saviour’s righteousness, for that robe is like his seamless garment, a perfect whole and without a rent of sin. It is a perfect covering for the penitent multitude, whose best deeds, aye, whose very penitence would merit punishment rather than possess claim to blessing. He who knew no sin, was made a sin offering for the guilty, that they who were all sin, might be shielded by His innocency and saved by his spotless character. O, how gracious, how merciful the Redeemer? How condescending to our apostate and undone race? He veiled Himself in our flesh; covered the glories of the Godhead in human form, that he might become our Mediator. And when humbled in the assumption of our nature, He bowed still lower in His humility. He humbled Himself to suffering and shame, to insult and torture and death, to save from everlasting punishment, the very authors of His pain,—the ungrateful rebels that sought His life. Surely, if the Redeemer were thus humbled to suffering, to work out a righteousness, in which man might be saved, man is guilty of base ingratitude, if he accept not the salva-

¹Rom. i. xvii.

tion. Surely, if the Saviour died in agony and shame, to rescue man from death, he is worthy of destruction's deepest, direst curse, if he refuse the shelter that His cross affords. O, if there is a body of the just;—a body righteous in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, it is man's excess of folly that he is not in union with it. He is a self-destroyer if he refuse or slight the privilege. And there is a body of the just. And with that body there is a blessing. It is blessed in the peace of God while it remains in a sinful world,—blessed with peace in the midst of the world's conflict, and in the commotion that reaches the altar of its hope. It is blessed in its passage over the wilderness of time. It is blessed in memory, blessed in the memory of its past history—in the faithful that have fallen like the seed into the earth, to bring forth the harvest of its prosperity—in the light that beams from the lives and characters of departed worthies to guide the feet of the living in the path of holiness they trod. "The righteous" saith the Scriptures, "shall be had in everlasting remembrance."¹ They of the past are green in memory now, though centuries have rolled since in the dust they slept. And green shall be their memorial until time, all burdened with the weight of years, shall drop into the eternal sea. In thought, and in the record of their deeds, the dead are with us still, and we think of the just, but to know that their memory is blessed. And that blessing can never be dimmed with age, nor lost amidst the lapse of years. When the sun shall hide his disc in darkness; when the moon shall blush in blood, and the pale stars chant the dirge of time, it shall be as fresh as if its dawn of glory had but just begun. While the eternal years of God shall sweep, the words of the princely Solomon shall be as true as now.

"The memory of the just is blessed."

4. The theme is vast, and rich, and glorious. The memory of the just is full of blessing, and there is pleasure in following out the history of the faithful of God, and in gazing upon the holy light that shines throughout their pathway. The worthy in Christ of other years, are like burning and shining lights in the temple. The history of the church is illumined by their characters, and distant ages of the faith glow with an immortal brilliancy, reflecting from the lives of devoted men the glory of the Saviour's example.

5. There is not an age of the past but points us to the memory of the just, not an era in the church's pilgrimage but tells us it is blessed. Neither the clouds of darkness that covered the Pagan world, nor the shadows of superstition that sometimes disfigured the beauty of the church, have even for a moment entirely obscured the light

¹Psalm, cxii. 6.

of holiness that beams upon her altar. The army of the faithful has ever been on the march, and the courts of the temple have never been destitute of worshippers.

II. 1. But it is not my purpose to-day, to speak of the just as a body. I esteem it a privilege to be able to delineate the character from *individual example*—example seen, and known, and admired among us. There was one, but recently in our midst, whose walk and conversation gave evidence that she had been washed in the waters of Regeneration. The proofs of her walk of faith were the fruits of a holy and devoted life. During her later years, the fear of God was continually before her eyes, and it appeared to be her steady aim to render such obedience to His commandments as would secure her peace of mind, and justify the hope, that when her worn out frame should be consigned to the earth, her spirit should be with God who gave it.

2. SARAH JOHNSON, the subject of my remarks, was born at Snow-hill, on the Eastern shore of Maryland, in the early part of the year 1742. She died on the night of the 4th of September, 1845, at the advanced age of nearly ONE HUNDRED AND FOUR YEARS.¹ She was the child of a century, a monument of God's protecting and preserving care; and it seemed as if she was permitted to remain so long among her friends and before the church, that the light of her example might be effectual in directing those around her to the same blessed service in which she always appeared to be so cheerful and happy.

3. Of the early history of our departed friend, I have learned but little, and what I have to say in regard to her character and Christian experience is more particularly connected with the last thirty-five years of her life. It is not presumed that in her early years she was free from the frailties to which the whole of her race is liable. She had to pass the same path of sin through which the way of the fallen descendants of our apostate head is traced. Nor would we imagine that she was faultless even in the old age which seemed to be so thoroughly given up to the responsibilities and duties of religion. Spotless perfection is no more to be claimed for her than it is for the multitudes of God's faithful people. Nor was it from any inherent merit that she possessed, that her life was protracted so long. She was but one of the vast posterity of a wretched apostate, and not in her own righteousness, but in the righteousness of her Redeemer was she made perfect and

¹I may mention it as a most remarkable instance of the providence of God exercised over this congregation, that our venerable friend is the first adult whose death I have recorded in the six years that I have been connected with it. One child was buried during the fifteen months that I had charge of the congregation as Lay Reader, and one since, making three in all. Surely an arm unseen, and all powerful has been our protection.

prepared, as we have every reason to believe, for a place among the heirs of salvation.

4. For several years before she was called to her rest, she seemed to have given up the world entirely, and it was seldom that she was heard to speak of its concerns. Its pomps and its vanities had lost their charms, and her mind was fixed on Heaven and the joys which are eternal at the right hand of God. When she met her friends, which she did frequently, for there were many who loved to visit her, it was her habit to speak to them about the great comfort which she enjoyed in the triumph of her spirit over every thing of an earthly and sensual nature. To her it was a delight to talk about the blessed privileges of God's house,—of the meeting of friends for worship,—of the solemn services and of the Holy Sacraments. In the midst of these, she seemed to dwell, and her spirit was always imbued with their heavenly influences. To converse of them was to her a source of highest happiness, and she spoke most eloquently in their praise. To her religious associates it was the cause of much pleasure that she spoke often of them in their presence, and in her usually animated and confident manner, they beheld the holy ardor of a soul utterly resigned to the will of God. And her even temperament, and quiet and unassuming habits were doubtless effectual in the production of good impressions upon the minds of many of her friends. She was always happy, but never seen in a state of excitement. Her religious deportment, and the atmosphere of sanctity that encircled her presence, will be remembered long by her associates of the communion at St. James'. Now that she is gone, you can meditate upon the hours of pleasant intercourse you have enjoyed with her, and from the glow of hallowed feeling which her presence inspired, and the religious fervor which you have often caught from her conversation, you can learn the value of her devoted example, and receive benefit in the effort to follow it. The remembrance of her virtues—of her deep-toned piety, and of her earnest solicitude for her own safety and for the salvation of those who were dear to her, will long remain upon the hearts on which her character has been imprinted in the intercourse of years. She is dead, but she may yet speak to the living in the character she has left for their review,—in the advice she gave while she was with them, and which they can hardly refuse to retain in memory,—in the warning that so frequently fell from her lips when the guilty deed was committed in her presence, and in the rebuke which she did not fail to give when she beheld the unfaithfulness of her friends of the communion, and their backwardness in the discharge of duties which they confessed, and responsibilities which they acknowledged were binding upon them. She is concealed from the sight of surviving throngs, but in remembered words of counsel, and admonition, and comfort,

her voice shall be heard, and its tones of power shall reach the hidden depths of the heart. She slumbers peacefully in the last asylum the earth can give her children, but her slighted reproofs have still a tale for the consciences of those who have turned away from them, and that tale may remain to trouble them until the deeds of better life shall show that her effort to reform the faithless has been effectual.

III. 1. For the purpose of presenting the deceased more clearly before you as an example worthy of your imitation, I shall arrange the further remarks that I have to make upon her history and character under two general heads. I shall speak

First, Of her belief, and,

Secondly, Of her practice.

I. I speak in the first place of

HER BELIEF.

1. I have been enabled to ascertain to a certain extent what she believed, from conversations held with her, and from information received from others who have had the opportunity of intercourse with her.

2. She believed that in the Sacrament of Baptism, she was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.¹ She recognized in the vows of the Baptismal Covenant, the entire responsibility of a christian believer in belief and in duty towards God and man, and she believed that to fulfil those vows as the Word of God and the church require, the individual must live a life of continual repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. She believed that the profession of faith in Christ is necessary to salvation; and in order to secure the safety of the believer, his life and habits must in all things conform to his profession; that he must obey the gospel as well as believe in its message. She acknowledged that to be a true Baptism which is received by the subject according to Christ's appointment, including the birth of water and of the Spirit, without which, as the Saviour declared to Nicodemus, a man "cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."²

3. She regarded the rite of Confirmation as the public acknowledgment of the Baptismal vows—a recognition of Christ, and His commandments, and the pledge of obedience to Him before God and the church. She believed that the subject of Confirmation is dedicated to God's service in a most solemn ordinance of the church—an ordinance which if rightly received in the renunciation of the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and in the accep-

¹Church Catechism.

²John iii. 5.

tance of Christ as the believer's portion, will be witnessed by the Holy Ghost in the reception of the individual, and in the bestowal of those gifts and graces, which are implied in the change of heart and life required by the Christian Covenant. She confessed it to be the privilege and duty of christian believers to leave the initiatory rites of their profession—"the doctrine of Baptisms and laying on of hands,"¹ and to go on to perfection, growing in grace, and in the knowledge of God until they should "all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."² It was to her a clear and most decided point of profession that Christ dwells in the heart by faith; and that dwelling in the heart, He rules the actions of the life, so that a true and faithful disciple of the Lord might be known by his works as readily as a tree might be discerned by its fruits.

4. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, she received as the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, whereby in the use of outward and visible emblems the believer feeds on the spiritual food of his Saviour's flesh, and is nourished and strengthened by the spiritual drink of the Saviour's blood. Her mind had no fellowship whatever, with the superstitious idea that the Sacramental emblems are flesh and blood corporeally, or in the gross material. She believed that there is no charm nor power of enchantment in their operation, but the mysterious movement of the Holy Ghost for the supply of the faithful with the spiritual food which is so necessary for the believer's connexion with the church's Head, and for his growth in grace. To her, this Sacrament was a most precious treasure, and she approached the altar of her God for its reception with the greatest reverence, and received it with evidences of the most solemn and awful feelings. She believed it to be possible for the renewed soul after receiving the Sacrament of entrance into Christ, and that of the spiritual food of His Body and Blood, to fall from grace and to be forever lost. And while she believed that the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as should thus stumble and fall, she was exceedingly watchful over her own heart, and careful in the actions of her life, lest she should forget and slight her vows and fall into condemnation. She was fearful of falling from grace, lest she should never be renewed.

5. Such was the belief of the subject of our discourse upon some of the more prominent doctrines of our faith. And the habits of her life showed how much she valued the means of grace the church afforded her. And this remark directs me to the second head into which our subject is divided.

¹Heb. vi. 2.

²Eph. iv. 13.

II. I am to speak in the second place upon

HER PRACTICE.

1. And upon this point I am informed that for thirty-five years past she has lived the life of a most exemplary and devoted christian. And here again, in order to render our subject plain and my remarks easily to be understood, I shall consider this head under four subdivisions. I shall speak of her practice of christian duty as it is seen

First, In her devotion to the church.

Secondly, In her integrity as a christian professor.

Thirdly, In her ardent piety.

Fourthly, In her upright walk and its end.

I. And in the first place, in regard to her *devotion to the church*, I am told that from her earliest years, it was to her the object of a strong and immovable attachment. She regarded the church as the instrument of God's appointment in which believers are united with the company of the faithful and with Christ their Head. She had great respect for its government, and fear of its authority. This respect and fear, she entertained through the years of a thoughtless youth, and of an early womanhood, during which, she manifested but little concern about the great and paramount interests of her soul. But in after life, when she became awakened to a sense of her situation as a rebel against the God to whom she was indebted for all the comforts and blessings she enjoyed, she determined upon a different course of life. She resolved to return to the Saviour and to the fold from which she had wandered, and to seek God's blessing in the assumption of her vows and in the services and ordinances appointed by Him for the remission of sins. In the surrender of the world and its sinful lusts, she sought in penitence and prayer the acceptance which she knew was promised to all who seek the Lord in faith. I have a good report of her for more than a third part of the century through which it pleased God to prolong her life. And I can speak with still greater confidence of her faithfulness during the six years that I have known her in her connexion with this church. I found her here a valued member of the communion, loved and prized by all around her, and I was soon a witness of the interest which all exhibited in her behalf. I know from her own declarations that she placed a high estimate upon her connexion with God's people, and that she esteemed it a happy privilege to assemble with them in the public worship. Her attachment to the services and ordinances of the church, she not only declared with her lips, but it was shown in her constant attendance upon them, and in the effect which they had upon her life. Notwithstanding her very advanced age, she had for several years

past appeared in her place in the church whenever circumstances admitted of her attendance. I have reason to believe that she was always present when the obstacles in the way of her attendance could by any means be surmounted. Until her hundred and first year, she was seldom absent, walking from her residence, a distance of more than three miles almost every Sunday, to meet her friends in the worship of God's house. And when from weakness and other infirmities, incident to her old age, she could not get to the church every Sunday, she made it a duty to attend, unless prevented by inclement weather or sickness, whenever the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was to be administered. And when again from increasing infirmities, she was obliged further to discontinue her visits to the church, she with great difficulty succeeded in reaching it once in three or four months. You who have communed with her at this altar, were more than once the witnesses of her joy, when after a long absence, she was enabled to kneel beside you at the Redeemer's feet, and receive with you the blessed memorials of His Passion and Death. You have rejoiced with her that she was spared to assemble in your midst and to feast with you on spiritual and heavenly food. Your rejoicing together was subdued and calm, and such as becomes the sanctuary of God, but it filled your hearts with pleasure unspeakable. There are many of you here to day, who remember with thankfulness the rejoicing of last Easter-day, when after her walk of over three miles, the old lady then *more than one hundred and three years of age* met you in the services of the church, at the altar of your God. It was a season of mutual gratulations when all hearts were happy, and none happier than hers. You were filled with gratitude to God, that the meeting was permitted, and that heart was bound to heart anew, and all to Christ once more in Sacramental pledges. It was a day of proud memorial—prouder than the meeting of the worldly for their short lived pleasures. The members of the church universal were gathered in different and distant lands, and the Lord was with them all. They met to rejoice that the crucified and buried Redeemer, had risen from the dead, and doubtless He rose in many a heart in the remission of its sins and in the acceptance of its service. And while the Master presided in the assemblies of the faithful in various parts of the world, He was not forgetful of our humble altar. He was at the head of our feast of love and had a place in every heart. There was no excitement, no burst of impassioned feeling, no unmeaning gesture, but the presence of the Lord was felt, and solemn and expressive silence mused His praise.

2. And this devotion to the church which was exhibited in the life of our venerable mother, was no thing of mere form and ceremony. It was not all upon the surface. It was the devotion in which the form is practiced as a witness of the obedience of the

heart, and for the reception of the promised grace. It was the form in which the Spirit resides, and in which He reveals Himself to the penitent and believing soul. And when the old veteran of the Cross met you in the use of this form, it was the assemblage of the communion for engagement in God's holy worship, and in the receipt of blessings—blessings in which all hearts participated, and which proved that the Spirit was near.

3. And such is the right and proper use of the forms of the church. They are the means by which we show our obedience to God and our desire to receive His blessing. They are the means whereby we approach the Lord in His sacred worship, and through which we receive the grace which he is ever willing and ready to bestow. To employ them as mere words and gestures is but their abuse in the mockery of worship, and the deed will meet with the condemnation rather than the approval of God. But to use them as expressions of the heart, and evidences of true worship, is to secure the presence of the Spirit among the worshippers and to bring the blessing of the Highest upon their efforts.

II. I am to notice in the second place: *The strict integrity of the deceased as a Christian professor.* Her life squared well with her profession. She boasted not of her attainments in christian perfection, nor did she claim any merit for her attention to known duties and discharge of acknowledged obligations. She was not desirous that the world should praise her for her christian graces, and herald the fame of her deeds of devotion. Her simplicity of manner and humble reliance upon God showed her to be a child in profession, while her stern and unyielding integrity in action proved her to be well matured in the experience and practice of religion. She pursued her way noiselessly and steadily, and in her calm and even temper of mind enjoyed prosperity without being seduced by its deceitful embrace, and encountered affliction unmoved from her purpose by its presence. In the moment of peace, she inclined not to the arm of flesh which seems to be always outstretched as if it would lure the unsuspecting whom the world has favored to lean upon its strength for support. In the hour of trial she knew her trust and reposed with confidence upon the promise it gave of protection. With principles fixed and firm, and certain that Truth was the rock upon which she rested, she was not to be shaken from her sure and well-grounded hope, but remained steadfast and immovable, while many around her were like "children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." (Eph. iv. 14.) Such unflinching confidence and sure confiding trust, was the result of an unwavering faith, and an undoubted reliance upon God for the support He has promised to the soul that rests on Him and looks and longs for His salvation. The heart that knows no other stay and leans on Him in all the sin,

cerity of its devoted love, will surely find Him to be the strength it needs—the staff upon which it may recline in the certainty of being sustained.

III. Again upon our third point. *The ardent piety of the departed rendered her a conspicuous object among her believing friends.* She was a woman of prayer, and her conversation showed that her spirit was subdued and chastened by heavenly intercourse. There was an air of piety in her manner,—a tone of humble devotedness in her speech, which expressed far more than could have been made manifest in words. It was the piety of the heart which looked out from her features, and spoke from her countenance. It was the tone of a deep and settled principle, which had its place in the affections and which revealed itself upon her tongue, and mingled with the sound of her voice. It was manifested without effort, and displayed itself in its beauty and excellence in her unconsciousness of its possession. With her it was not as it is with many, a thing of most anxious desire to be esteemed as a person of extraordinary acquirements in religion. Such characters generally profess more than they experience, and tell more than they feel. And it is not unfrequently the case that they bring disgrace upon themselves and upon the cause in which they would be conspicuous, by the commission of acts entirely at variance with the character they assume. They would have their sanctity to be seen by the multitude, and they would be admired by crowds for the height of holiness which they profess and declare that they have attained. And surely this is a strange ambition for the follower of Christ to indulge. It is the ambition of the Pharisees, which the Saviour so plainly and pointedly reproveth. It was their pride to be gazed at by the world and to have the praises of men. But the Lord who sees into the heart, knew them to be the basest of hypocrites. He called them whited sepulchres, “and said that they were beautiful without, but within were full of dead men’s bones and of all uncleanness.”¹ But the very opposite of this self-confident and self-righteous character was that possessed by our departed friend. She said but little of herself except to acknowledge her unworthiness, and to bewail that she had been so unfaithful to her God. When spoken to in relation to her christian experience, and complimented for her continued calm and unruffled temperament, she would say: “Alas for my life of unfaithfulness! Would that I deserved to be called righteous! But I look back upon so much sin, and see so many black marks upon my life, that I have cause to weep rather than to rejoice,—to call myself the unclean before God, rather than the faithful in His service.” When she saw any one exulting in the excess of what they supposed was religious feeling, and boasting of a close communion with the Lord, she would say: “Take care child, that boasting little becomes a sinner, and you will be brought down. Lay

¹Matt. xxiii. 27.

yourself in the dust where you ought to be, and humble yourself before God, and then you may expect His blessing."

2. In the church her deportment was most solemn and reverential. She engaged in the services in a spirit of the deepest devotion, which showed that the world was shut out from her thoughts, and that there were none of her religious moments to be devoted to other employments. She was seldom seen to smile in the sanctuary of God, even after the services were concluded. And whenever her countenance was lit up by its expression of pleasure at the greeting of friends, who were accustomed to gather around her, there was a manifest suppression of her joy, and a peculiar shade upon her features, which told that she remembered the place where she was standing, and which seemed to say, "this is God's house, and it is holy;—holiness becometh this house, and awe the people that assemble in its courts."

3. Surely such ardent, and to all appearance, such sincere piety as was exhibited in her life, is the characteristic of one whose belief was settled in the principles of religion—one devoted to her God, and to the services of His sanctuary. One firm in her purpose to obey, as she had ability, the precepts and commandments of the Gospel.

IV. 1.—I now turn to the fourth and last subdivision of this head of our subject. And this is the consideration of *her upright walk and its end*. Of the last thirty-five years of her life, as I have already stated, I speak as I have been informed by others, but of the last six that she was permitted to remain among us, I can speak with the more certainty, having been acquainted with her, and observed her movements during that period. I am informed that after the resumption of her vows, and the dedication of herself in the church to the service and worship of God, she gradually advanced in her religious experience; and as she became older, she seemed to lose sight of the world and its enjoyments and to devote herself more and more to the duties and services of religion. From actual observation I can say that I believe this to have been the case for the last six years. From the time that I became acquainted with her in my connexion with this church, she has appeared to live less and less and for the world and more and more for Heaven. I believe that her life during that time was a standing reproof of impiety and of unfaithfulness of every character. I have seen her in the church. I have seen her at home. I have seen her abroad among her friends. And to me she has ever appeared the same devoted servant of Christ, walking by faith in Him, and using the means of His appointment, for the increase of her spiritual knowledge and for her growth in spiritual grace. The same testimony is borne by many of her companions of the communion of God's altar. She has moved in and out among her associates like one

who was not of this world, but who was journeying through it, as through a wilderness, to another, and a better, and a more enduring clime. As the world receded from her, the more did she cast off its cares, and the more did she become resigned to the will of Him into whose hands she committed the keeping of her spirit. She expressed the strongest confidence in God, and believed that He would wash her thoroughly, and from her latest sin in the laver of the Redeemer's blood, and purify and prepare her soul for the dwelling place of the blest. After the communion on Easter-day, I asked her if she felt that she was getting nearer to Heaven, as she approached the grave. Her reply was the usual acknowledgment of her unworthiness, but in the confidence of an unwavering faith she declared that her hope was as strong that she should reach Heaven, as her mind was satisfied that she would soon go down to the grave. "I am sinful," said she, "but my Redeemer is all righteousness, in myself I am lost, but in Him I am safe. I pray that I may be faithful to the end and that my Saviour may be my portion forever."

2. The last time I saw her at home and in life, I noticed how strongly her spirit seemed to be imbued with the influence of holiness and Heaven. There was not a shade of obscurity between her mental vision and the experience of her life. She saw her sinfulness and grieved that her character had, at any time during her history been stained with impurity; and she beheld the open fountain of her Redeemer's blood, and rejoiced that it was provided to wash her stains away. She had not then a doubt but that she would be saved; and when I asked how that great work was to be accomplished, she answered, "Not by me, but by faith in Jesus Christ, my Saviour." I asked her if she was willing to die. She said with great animation, "My dear child, if it is my Saviour's will, I am not only willing to die, but I am anxious to be gone." I asked her if she was weary of the world in which she had lived so long. She replied, "Yes, I am really and truly weary of the world; I have lived so long in it and seen so much of its evil that I am sometimes impatient to leave it." I asked her if she was perfectly satisfied that she was safe, knowing that she had been sinful in the sight of God. "I am safe not in myself," she answered, "but in my Saviour; I know that my soul is safe in His hands. O I know it so well," said she, "that I am anxious He should have it. Would that He might take it now!" A short time after I held this conversation with her, I was told that she was dead. The intelligence was brought me by the person who came to request me to attend the funeral. My inquiry from him and others was, how the lamp of the aged christian had expired. I was told that she had died as she had lived, an humble, self-accusing yet trusting disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. Her exit was as peaceful as the passing of a

lovely summer's eve. The sun of life went down without a cloud, and she laid as calm and still in dying as the smooth unruffled lake when the night shadows are slowly stealing over it. A friend at her side was reading to her the Word of God, and as she listened to the recital of the Sacred Record, her spirit departed to look upon the realities which were rehearsed in her ear of flesh. The last sounds that she heard upon earth were those that told her of the Kingdom of God, and perhaps the first realities that broke upon the sight of her released soul, were those that confirmed the truth of what she had heard. She laid so still while the reader was performing his task, that one approached to look upon her to ascertain if she was not asleep. The examination disclosed what had hardly been indicated by suspicion. She was indeed asleep,—asleep to wake no more until the trump of the Archangel shall awaken the millions of the sepulchre for the judgment of the Lord.

She is gone. Life's fitful pulse is told and she sleeps well. Some of you looked upon her countenance when her form was calm and cold in its preparation for the grave, and you saw the same subdued smile that played upon her features when they were instinct with life, and which cheered you so often in your meetings with the mother in Israel whom you loved so well. With that smile she has gone to the grave and to the dust, and if you are faithful to your vows, in all they demand of you, you may possess the comfortable hope that it will greet you again. Aye, if you are as faithful as we have every reason for believing she was, you may enjoy the hope that the same familiar smile will greet you in the morning of the resurrection, when you shall meet the departed, to pass with her into the rest of the righteous,—the rest that remaineth for the faithful of God.

3. Our venerable mother was of the number of those whom the Scriptures designate as the just. She was of the number of the blessed company of faithful people who renounce the world for the acceptance of Christ,—who feed on spiritual food in the sanctuary of God, and whose faithful lives attest the resignation of the heart to the obedience of the Gospel. She was numbered with the just in the militant church, and her memory is blessed. It is deeply enshrined in many hearts, and shall be blessed by them until they cease to beat. By God's grace the memory of her faithfulness may operate upon you as the incentive to deeper devotion and to greater diligence in His service. It may be blessed in the faithfulness of your lives and induce you to search more and more after Heavenly wisdom and to be more and more conformed to your profession. It may be blessed in your salvation if it be improved by you as God designs all such visitations of His Divine Providence shall be.

4. Our aged friend has departed, but the light of her example is

still here. It burns with an increased brightness now that she has left us, for it appears before us in all the vividness of its reality, quickened by the interest which her departure has occasioned. The example of her life is held up before you to day. You see it as I have presented it in the different subdivisions of the third part of this discourse. You see it in her *devotion to the church*. You see it in her *integrity as a christian professor*. You see it in her *ardent piety*. You see it in her *upright walk and its end*. If she had faults, and by her own confession, her sins were many and greivous; you are warned by these faults to shun the path of evil, lest the cloud be cast over your experience in the last days of your lingering age. The dark side of the picture may show you where the light is, and make that light more brilliant. The light is in the path of the just, which shineth more and more into the perfect day. It is the example of the deceased's virtues that I would hold up to your sight, for your admiration and for your imitation. Imitate her then,

1. *In her devotion to the church*. Regard the company of God's faithful people as your friends and brethren, and fail not to assemble yourselves with them. Meet them in the Baptism which makes you one with Christ; in the surrender of the world and its ways of wickedness; in the sacrifice of your hearts to God in the Sacramental feast, which the altar of His love provides. Emulate her,

2. *In her integrity as a christian professor*. Be firm and unyielding in your obedience to God. Fix your feet upon the Rock of our salvation, and abide in Him forever. Cling to the altar of God as the anchor of your hope, and let it be known to the world by your profession and in the record of your actions, that you are fixed and immovable in the Master's service. Be regular in your habits of life, regular in your devotions, and regular in your attendance upon the public worship of God's house. Let your seat never be vacant when you can possibly avoid it, and in all things pertaining to your profession stand fast and firm. The grace of God is sufficient for you. It will keep you from falling if you seek it. It will strengthen and establish you, so that you shall be able to resist the wiles of the devil, to conquer all the foes of your faith and to triumph with the just in the great battle for salvation. Emulate her,

3. *In her ardent piety*. Let your prayers give evidence of your intercourse with God, and let the actions of your life speak forth your profession. If you are really and ardently devoted to the services of religion, you need not proclaim it with your lips to the world, nor make a boast of your attainments. If you are pious your piety will be seen. The fruits of the life are they which tell of the condition of the heart, and if your fruits be the fruits of holiness the world will know that Christ is dwelling within you. Let

your works speak for you; let your faithfulness be apparent in deeds, and then even the men of the world will believe you much sooner than they will credit any boast of righteousness you can make with your lips. Study the Word of God regularly and constantly; make it the rule of your faith and the guide of your lives. Partake of its spirit and you shall feed upon the treasures of grace, and your fruits of holiness shall be seen and appreciated. Emulate her,

4. *In her upright walk.* Let no sin be charged upon your character—no neglect of duty upon your christian profession. Walk in all things as becomes the Gospel. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind and soul, and your neighbor as yourself, and you shall be successful in securing the friendship of God and the blessing which He is ever ready to bestow upon His devoted servants. Living thus in the fear of God and in keeping His commandments, the last years of your life may be peaceful, and in the end you may be triumphant over death, and claim the crown of endless life which the redeemed shall possess forever in the kingdom of God. And thus to emulate the deceased, think much of her character. Meditate often upon the pleasant intercourse you have had with her in spirit, in your private devotions, in the public worship, in the Sacrament of the Holy Supper, and in the forms of service in which you have so often been happy together.

5. Your venerable friend, as I have said before, has left you, but the light of her example has not. She has passed from the life of earth and its labors but a little while before you. It is your privilege to follow in the path of faith in which she walked, and to profit by her experience. And following her in faith as she followed Christ, you may follow her to the place of the blest, where we hope and believe she is now at rest. She has gone from the altar where you knelt with her in the Sacramental feast,—gone from the aisles where you met her in the friendly grasp of the hand,—gone from your midst to be seen no more by you upon earth. And the testimony is with you that she has gone to be happy with God. Be faithful to the vows she honored. Let the proofs of your obedience be the fruits of holy living, and you may meet her in the home of eternal joy, where pleasures exist without pain, life without death, and where the memory of the just is embalmed in blessing forever.

And now, to God the Father Son and Holy Ghost, be ascribed by all men in the emulation of the just, all honor and dominion henceforth and ever, world without end. Amen.